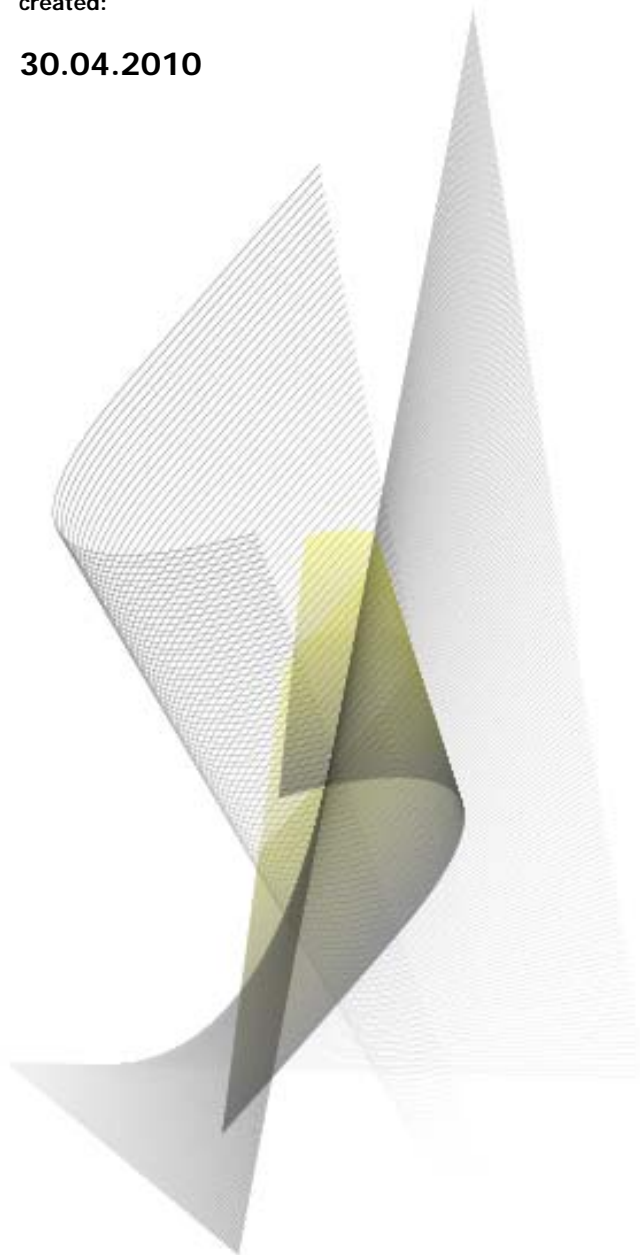


# Global Wine Trends

## Weekly Update

created:

**30.04.2010**



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## Global Market Watch

*The global market watch outlines developments, spotted and emerging trends that define the current situation in the global wine landscape. It includes all major developments in the market including consumer trends relating to wine and marketing campaigns or approaches, as well as concerns on health and sustainability.*

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### Heritage motivates fine wine consumers

OFF LICENCE NEWS, UK

28.04.10: **Heritage and provenance are the biggest motivating factors for fine wine consumers, according to new research from Wine Intelligence. But fine wine purchasers are less concerned with the ethical credentials of producers and the scarcity of fine wine, according to the research revealed at the Fine Wine 2010 conference hosted by the Consejo Regulador de la Denominacion de Origin of the Ribera del Duero region, and managed by Wine Intelligence.** Lulie Halstead, chief executive of Wine Intelligence, said: "If you don't have history, if you're new, it's clearly a problem how you can overcome that as a producer, distributor or a retailer. You have to find a way to reassure consumers who are looking for heritage as the first thing when they are buying fine wine." The provenance associated with a region is next on fine wine consumers' lists when buying wine, followed by the hand-crafted nature of production, critical acclaim, family-owned credentials and rarity. Ethical credentials were seventh and last on the list of major motivators for fine wine consumers. "Rarity is really for those who consider themselves to be collectors and ethical is certainly a calculation that people make but is not a deal maker or deal breaker." Halstead said that retailers and producers ignored the contribution of occasional fine wine consumers at their peril. "There are 7 million consumers of luxury or super-premium wines and they account for 13% of the total spend on wine in the UK, but that means there are an awful lot of pounds being handed over that aren't in the fine wine category."

<http://www.offlicencenews.co.uk/articles/82855/Heritage-motivates-fine-wine-consumers.aspx?category=245>

### Fraud alert over Bordeaux wine futures

AFP, FRANCE

28.04.10: **Concerns are growing in some wine industry circles that a few rogue Chinese wine traders may be mounting a wine scam, just as the 2009 Bordeaux futures sales are poised to begin, experts fear. Fine wine merchant Bordeaux Index alleged that unscrupulous traders in Shanghai had hoodwinked private customers into ordering and paying for the 2009 vintage of legendary wines.** Among the top wine names concerned were Chateau Lafite and its popular second wine, Carruades de Lafite, when there is little possibility that the wines will be delivered. The top Bordeaux wines this year are widely expected to be of particularly good quality. "We've long had concerns that a vintage like the 2009 Bordeaux could result in fraudulent futures trading," said Sam Gleave, Hong Kong sales director for Bordeaux Index. Simon Staples, sales director at Berry Bros & Rudd in London, told AFP that he did not want to be a "scaremonger" but felt caution was necessary, especially



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in a market that has not traditionally bought en primeur. "I would not be surprised if three times more 2009 Lafite will be sold than has been made," he said. **The alleged problem is not limited to Shanghai. BBR's representative in Mainland China sent Hong Kong managing director Nicholas Pegna an Internet link, also provided to AFP, to a Chinese wine shop selling Carruades 2009 at 580 yuan (85 dollars, 64 euros). The wine has not been released for sale, so there is no legitimate price. ...**

**According to Francois Leveque, president of the Bordeaux wine and spirits brokers' syndicat, so far, none of the 2009 vintage grand cru classé wines has been released for sale.** "We are waiting for Robert Parker's ratings today," said Leveque. In a spectacular vintage like 2009, the wine critic's ratings will fuel the excitement and generate dynamic trading. "The real campaign will begin next week." But many consumers do not understand how the system works, and the Chinese, now the biggest volume customer for Bordeaux outside the EU, are still new to the en primeurs market, leaving them vulnerable to hucksters. "There's a huge interest in the 2009 Bordeaux from China," said Gleave. "In an unregulated and uneducated market, there was always potential for rogue trading in en-primeur. Unfortunately, it seems as if that potential has been realised." The alleged scam is to offer the wine for sale, take the customers money and then never deliver the wine. The fraud becomes apparent only with time. "We cannot call it wine fraud because it will be another two years before a crime could be considered to have been committed," ...

**Concerns about a possible confidence trick, arising from past experience, are based on offers of the wine for sale, taking customers' money but never delivering the wine. The 2000 vintage attracted disreputable traders, including two Bordeaux merchants who absconded with more than a million euros, by selling wine en primeurs.** No wine was ever purchased or delivered. Another alleged case comes to trial in Britain this June in which the directors of two wine investment companies have been accused of conspiracy to defraud investors who allegedly paid en primeur for wine that was never received. Staples told AFP that he had not yet come across any illicit trading of the 2009 vintage in Britain but that he had "been worried that this would raise its ugly head as we get closer to 'game time' for the fabled 2009s." Gleave said that "we urge buyers interested in the 2009 Bordeaux to deal exclusively with reputable merchants only." **Prior to the release on the market, "anyone offering top 2009 Bordeaux is a fraud."**

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxcwdIqsp\\_cX2tXPvZUcP-7OX8pQ](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxcwdIqsp_cX2tXPvZUcP-7OX8pQ)

## 'Cheap wine' ads for SurplusWines.co.uk did not deliver

BBC NEWS, UK



29.04.10: **Hundreds of people are thought to have lost money after responding to two national newspaper adverts for consignments of cheap wine.** The ads for SurplusWines.co.uk promised "huge savings on fine wines and champagnes". **The half-page adverts appeared in both the Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mail on Saturday, 6 March 2010.** West Yorkshire Police estimate several hundred people placed orders, but are unaware of any wine being delivered. The adverts read: "With restaurants and public houses closing down on an almost daily basis due to the current recession, a European supplier to the wholesale wine merchant and restaurant trade



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has been left with surplus stock due to cancelled orders." **"Surplus Wine UK have been instructed to clear this surplus stock by the case, direct to the public at less than trade prices!"** But people who paid up-front for cases of wine have not received them. ...

#### No refunds

West Yorkshire Police have been unable to find anyone receiving wine or champagne after placing an order but would like to hear from anyone who did. **Surplus Wines UK was owned by a parent company, Mardenis Ltd, which was based at a restaurant - No 3 York Place - in Leeds city centre.** Mardenis went into administration just four weeks after the newspaper advertisements appeared. **The restaurant is closed and police say they have been unable to contact the director of Mardenis Ltd, Dennis LeFrancq and believe he is no longer in the UK.** "Quite clearly we would like to speak to him at the earliest opportunity," said Acting Detective Sergeant Jon Cockeram from West Yorkshire Police's Economic Crime Unit. "We would hope he would be able to fill us in with the background of what has occurred and clarify the situation." In a letter sent to customers who ordered wine, the administrators, Armstrong Watson, state: **"If anyone has ordered and paid for goods that have not been delivered by the Company, regrettably, the Company is not in a position to supply these orders". "Refunds will not be possible due to the Company's lack of funds when it entered administration.** Anyone affected by this is now classed as an unsecured creditor". The administrators have refused to comment any further.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8652197.stm>

#### Chateau Musar: wine from Lebanon

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, UK



23.04.10: The Phoenicians, famous for their enterprise throughout the region, considered wine to be an important element of religious ceremony; and Bacchus, the Roman god, may well have origins in the wine rituals of Canaan. Sadly, the Lebanese seem to have lost their passion for such things. But wine is still produced from grapes grown in the vineyards of the Bekaa Valley and enjoyed in Europe and elsewhere, the UK being one of its most enthusiastic consumers. **Chateau Musar, one of the three main Lebanese winemakers and the most famous in the West, cultivates its grapes in the Bekaa, where, at 1,000 metres, the cool nights lengthen the crucial ripening process. The grapes are then transported to a site in the hills north of Beirut, in Ghazir, for production.** It was to these hills that I travelled to taste Chateau Musar's wines and to meet the Hochar family, who own and run the winery. Serge Hochar, a former Decanter Man of the Year, is a youthful 70 years old and has been managing the estate for fifty years. These days he is ably assisted by his son, Gaston (named after his Grandfather, the Gaston Hochar who founded Chateau Musar in 1930), and chief oenologist, Tarek Sakr. Those fifty years have presented a variety of challenges – especially in continuing production through civil war and invasion – but only once, in 1976, has a vintage been missed. That said, in 1984, the overland route from the Bekaa to Ghazir blocked by fighting, grapes had to be transported instead west to the Mediterranean, then via boat to Jounieh, north of Beirut, and overland from there to the



hills of Ghazir. **This convoluted journey was completed successfully, but by the time the grapes reached the presses, five days late, they were spoiled so Mr Hochar, showing a resourcefulness common to the Lebanese, produced Madeira instead. Some bottles were set aside and cellared, and regular checks have suggested it is maturing into a very good wine.** As well as this accidental foray into Madeira, Chateau Musar produces Arak, the aniseed-flavoured cousin of raki and ouzo – and the local favourite. But it is the wines that are more familiar to Western palates. The Chateau Musar White is made from indigenous obaideh and merwah grape varieties. It is often suggested that the former is an ancestor of chardonnay, having been originally exported from the Middle East to Europe; the latter resembles semillon. The 2001 is gold in colour with delightful flavours of honey and spiced apple, and has a long finish. The more famous Chateau Musar Red, a blend of cinsault, carignan and cabernet sauvignon, is aged in Nevers oak, blended in its third year and then bottled and aged for a further four. Drunk separately, the cinsault is suggestive of mature red plum; the carignan offers a hint of pineapple; and the cabernet sauvignon has a smooth sweetness (Tarek describes it as milkshake, but Mr Hochar cannot bring himself to quite agree). What we are all decided upon is that the ultimate blend is wonderful: soft and velvety with a touch of pepper. ...

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/offers/7610461/Chateau-Musar-Telegraph-Wine-focuses-on-this-Lebanese-wine.html>

## Berry Bros opens second Hong Kong store

DECANTER, UK

28.04.10: Berry Bros & Rudd has opened its second outlet in Hong Kong. Berrys' Fine Wine Reserve, is part of the Hong Kong home of Alfred Dunhill, alongside a tailoring service, restaurant and bar. **The shop has a tasting area and a range of services including fine wine investment advice, en primeur, corporate wine tastings, fine wine sourcing and education, and cellar plans. The opening coincides with the beginning of the Bordeaux 2009 en primeur campaign, tipped to attract significant numbers of Asian buyers for the first time.** 'It is just coincidental that it falls during the 2009 campaign, but shop staff will no doubt be dealing with lots of enquiries from customers wanting to buy Bordeaux 2009,' a Berrys spokesperson told decanter.com. Berrys has operated in Hong Kong since 1999, opening its first shop in Causeway Bay in 2003.

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297419>

## Bruce Tyrrell: Great Australian vineyards will outlast grubbing-up phase

DECANTER, UK

29.04.10: Hunter Valley winemaker Bruce Tyrrell has spoken out about the grape oversupply crisis in Australia. **An glut of unwanted grapes from the 2009 harvest had forced many growers to sell their vineyard sites, which were bought up by mining companies.** Speaking at the Fine Wine 2010 conference in Ribera del Duero, Spain, Tyrrell told decanter.com that despite a surge in the number of vineyards being sold, he expected the best sites to survive. **'A lot of vineyards are being demolished and the coal miners are buying them up, but no great vineyards will be lost,' he said. 'On the one hand we've**



**got the government pushing a sustainability initiative, and on the other we've got vineyards being turned into mining sites.'** 'Newcastle in New South Wales is the world's largest coal export port.' In February, a leading academic claimed that Australia needed to reduce its vineyard area by as much as 30% if it wanted to achieve supply-demand balance. Tyrrell, who hand picks and uses a traditional grape press for his three single vineyard whites, is keen to protect the historic sites. 'I'm looking into making the single vineyards from the oldest blocks National Heritage sites so no one can touch them.' Referring to the 2010 vintage in Australia dominated by rain and cool weather, a stark contrast to the heat and fire of last year Tyrrell was bullish. 'We've had great rains this year', he said. 'Our place looks like the Garden of Eden I can't buy enough cattle to eat the grass.'

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297511>

## Wine: Pay more, drink better

THE GUARDIAN , UK



24.04.10: **Shortly after the 2000 budget, the average price of a bottle of wine bought in a shop was £3.62. Duty was £1.16 a bottle, which meant the combined cost of duty and VAT was £1.70, leaving £1.92 for everything else. Today, the average price is £4.35, duty is £1.69 and the combined cost of duty and VAT is £2.34, leaving £2.01 – just 9p more – for everything else.** It doesn't take a mathematical or economic genius to work out that a decade's compound inflation on glass, shipping, labels, etc, not to mention the effect of sterling's recent collapse, is not going to be covered by 9p. Or that the main casualty is the money spent on the actual wine inside that average bottle. **It's a shortfall even supermarkets' sharp buying practices, and the hit many producers have taken to remain on the shelves, can't paper over. Result: we're not drinking as well as we used to. Why have we failed to persuade people that spending a couple of pounds more will buy a much better wine (because a higher proportion of the money is spent on what you actually drink)?** I can't believe this is all about tight household budgets: people seem to have plenty of cash to splash on high street caffè lattes, mineral water and other sundries. This is about priorities, and perceptions. Somewhere we lost the sense of excitement and romance, the idea that uncorking a bottle is An Event. Instead we behave as if wine is some sort of crude alcoholic fuel, a staple that must be purchased for as little as possible. Supermarkets are largely to blame for instilling the idea that wine should be evaluated on price, not taste, by piling it high, on special "deals" that reduce its value. As a wine journalist banging away on this subject for what seems like the millionth time, I feel an abject failure, too. ...

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2010/apr/24/quality-price-wine-review>

## Wildman sets up wine travel tours to Australia

HARPERS WINE & SPIRIT, UK

28.04.10: **A new travel company has been set up to provide bespoke wine trips to Australia for the wine trade. Tim Wildman MW has launched James Busby Travelto**



**give wine professionals who have not visited Australia's wine regions before the chance to not only discover its producers and wines, but tap into a network of advice when they return.** Wildman said: "Our tours are all about bringing a precision and focus to the arena of educational wine travel. Aimed solely at the trade, we place a strong emphasis on understanding terroir and small group tastings that add up to a high quality experience for both the visitors and the winemakers involved. **For those up and coming members of the wine trade looking to invest in themselves and their careers this is the opportunity of a lifetime.**" After each trip a forum will be set up to link visitors with the Australian producers they have visited. The first trip is due to take place in and anyone interested in taking part should contact Wildman through his website or Westbury Communications which has been appointed to work with James Busby Travel in the UK.

<http://www.harpers.co.uk/news/news-headlines/8958-wildman-sets-up-wine-travel-tours-to-australia-.html>

## Global Industry Watch

*This section records developments and trends on both industry and individual corporation levels that form a matrix of the major issues and moves in the industry as a whole or by its critical actors and groupings, such as trade associations and regulatory bodies.*

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### Wine & Spirits Wholesalers spent \$240K on lobbying

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, USA

28.04.10: **The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America spent \$240,000 in the first quarter lobbying the federal government on labor issues, food safety and other issues, according to a recent disclosure report.** That's less than the \$300,000 the group spent in the year-ago period and the \$280,000 it spent in the fourth quarter of 2009. The national trade organization, whose members distribute wine and spirits sold in the U.S., lobbied on transportation, the budget and other issues during the January-March period. Besides Congress, the organization lobbied the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Health and Human Services, and other agencies, according to the report filed April 19 with the House clerk's office.

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5j-QZnHVWnGqrr\\_Oirq06AFO7vm5wD9FAP10G2](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5j-QZnHVWnGqrr_Oirq06AFO7vm5wD9FAP10G2)

### Italy: Brunello regains US trust

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, USA

29.04.10: Italy's agriculture minister says Brunello di Montalcino wine has regained U.S. trust and no longer needs special approval for shipment to American markets. Two years ago, Italy created a panel of experts to check if the wine, one of Italy's best known, meets production standards. **There had been fears some of the wine might have been cut with other grape varieties instead of only sangiovese grapes. U.S. authorities required special documentation indicating that Brunello coming into the country had been inspected to ensure quality.** Minister Giancarlo Galan said Thursday that starting May 1 that special

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approval will no longer be required since Brunello has "won back" Americans' trust. About one-quarter of the Brunello produced each year goes to the U.S.

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gsyYB0YzF3tYUVtGUcT\\_I83as6WwD9FCUA680](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gsyYB0YzF3tYUVtGUcT_I83as6WwD9FCUA680)

## Wine industry welcomes Govt's tax-rise rejection

BUSINESS DAY, NEW ZEALAND

**28.04.10: An indication by the Government that it will not adopt recommendations to ramp up excise tax on alcohol have been welcomed by the struggling wine industry.**

Among recommendations in a Law Commission report on how to reduce alcohol-related harm in New Zealand was the suggestion of a 50 percent excise tax increase, a move that would lead to an average retail price increase of 10 percent and a predicted reduction in alcohol consumption of 5 percent. While growth in the low-cost alco-pop industry has been singled out for the rise in intoxication among young people, excise tax increases would affect the price of drinks across the board. Prime Minister John Key and Justice Minister Simon Power said yesterday it would be weeks before solid decisions would be made on the report's recommendations, but both said excise tax was unlikely to rise. The New Zealand Winegrowers body said the wine industry, which was facing tough trading conditions at the moment, would be hit hard by any tax increases. "Excise is a production tax. In a fiercely competitive marketplace, it is virtually impossible for wineries to pass on excise increases to retailers and consumers. So excise increases just end up being another tax on winery income," said the body's policy manager John Barker. Dr Baker said such an increase would tend to penalise the wineries and responsible consumers without reducing alcohol-related harm. "Current trading conditions are extremely difficult for wineries and a substantial increase in excise will make it very difficult for some wineries to remain economically viable," he said. "Small wineries are particularly vulnerable. This part of the industry is a key driver of tourism and regional development, and anything that affects the profitability of small wineries will be felt in many rural centres." The Law Commission report considered alcohol price to be a critical factor in moderating demand, and 77 percent of nearly 3000 submissions received supported excise tax increases. Commission head Sir Geoffrey Palmer said alcohol excise tax was already structured to favour the wine industry and potential effects of hikes were considered to be minimal.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/industries/3630906/Wine-industry-welcomes-Govts-tax-rise-rejection>

## M&S chief: minimum pricing is 'insane'

DECANTER, UK



**26.04.10: The boss of UK high street giant Marks & Spencer has launched an outspoken attack on the idea of government intervention in the pricing of alcohol.** Specifically addressing the wine market, Sir Stuart Rose (pictured) called proposals to introduce a minimum price for alcohol 'insane'. **'Artificially fixing a base price to stop people drinking wine is insane,' he told decanter.com. 'As an extreme example, if you go back to 1930s America, prohibition doesn't work.** 'England's Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson has called for a minimum



pricing policy. **The government initially ruled out the suggestion, but has said it wants to crack down on cheap alcohol.** It has not yet said how it would do this, and has made it clear that it does not want to impose additional burdens on the majority of 'moderate' drinkers. The Scottish Government has signalled support for the introduction of a minimum price of 40p per unit if its debated Alcohol Bill is passed. **The Conservatives, meanwhile, have said that instead of raising taxes on all drinks, they would want targeted increases in duty on problem drinks like super-strength beers and action against below-cost selling.** Rose, who is set to retire as chief executive of M&S later this year, said he felt that the wine industry is being unfairly penalised. 'They keep whacking up the tax on wine, dressing it up by saying it's [motivated by concern over] health. That's rubbish it's a guaranteed revenue method for them.' Rose said he was against legislation, but in favour of 'common sense'. 'Giving stuff away for nothing isn't helpful,' he said. 'But having a government impose a minimum price for wine is insane. 'In any society, there are always some people who can't say no. But why should the majority of people be dictated to by the bad habits of the minority just because a few people get drunk in the streets?' Asked about the practice of loss-leading by some of his competitors, Rose said he didn't like the practice, but was against outlawing it. **'We live in a free market economy,' he said. 'As a retailer I'm against putting regulation in to say what you can and cannot do. Where do you draw the line? We all know customers like a bargain. Why should wine be exempt from that?'** Despite the concern over irresponsible drinking, Rose claimed he was 'more worried that the nation is becoming obese than I am about people drinking too much'.

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297348>

## Bordeaux wines get £1m backing

OFF LICENCE NEWS, UK

23.04.10: **The Bordeaux Wine Council is investing £1 million in a marketing campaign which celebrates Bordeaux wines' compatibility with food. Called Good Food Would Choose Bordeaux, the push highlights the natural relationship between food and wines from the region.** Print and outdoor poster ads will feature illustrations of wine bottles and glasses, which have been made to look like certain foods, such as bread, cheese and a lobster. Douglas Morton from the CIVB said: "Overwhelming feedback from existing drinkers confirmed that, alongside the quality and tradition associated with Bordeaux, its great gift lies in its ability to produce wines that enhance any meal. **"In a period of unprecedented general interest in the preparation and enjoyment of food we hope that this campaign will encourage more consumers to discover this relationship for themselves. The message is very simple: if you love food, you'll love Bordeaux."** The campaign will be primarily targeted at ABC1 adults aged 35 and above.

<http://www.offlicencenews.co.uk/articles/82683/Bordeaux-wines-get-%C2%A31m-backing.aspx?categoryid=245>

## US merchants: we'll buy, but not at any price

DECANTER, UK

23.04.10: **The attitude of the US Bordeaux merchants is an odd mixture of**



**defensiveness and truculence, with little consensus on what consumers' buying patterns will look like. On the one hand there is a definite feeling that they want to buy this vintage and will snap up the first tranche of First Growths at almost any price. But at the same time they are keen to send out warnings that Bordeaux has to work hard to woo back US buyers after several disastrously-priced vintages.** Premier Cru in Emeryville, California, receives calls every day for First Growth reservations. Its owner John Fox expects high prices because 'the vintage has been hyped up so much that, historically, the chateaux take advantage of that. I feel bad that the chateaux are going to do what they are going to do, but that is the reality of the market.' Fox expects to sell a certain amount of first tranche wines 'at almost any price - we have a certain group of customers who would buy at the opening tranche price whatever it may be.' After that, he added, with price rises with each subsequent tranche, 'it would require a lot more thinking'. Simon Lambert of the Chicago Wine Company has the same attitude, refusing to name a 'threshold price'. 'We are not ready to spend an unlimited amount...

In the current climate, 'Restaurants are not buying like they used to and the general health of the wine buying segment is not the same,' Bishop said. There is by no means consensus on what consumers are interested in this year. If merchants think the First Growths will be snapped up, others are less sanguine. Mark Wessels of MacArthur Liqueurs in Washington DC, said his clients would be 'very sensitive' to pricing and he sees less demand for First Growths and other top wines. 'Customers will not choose wines like Angéus, Léoville Las Cases and Palmer' which were among the most expensive non-First Growths from the 2005 campaign. **'They will buy the best wines at the best prices. Money no longer grows on trees.'** And then there is the inevitable warning note, struck by Simon Lambert. 'Bordeaux proprietors have to consider that they lost a lot of following with US consumers over the last couple of vintages. Whether that has a bearing on prices, I don't know, but it would be great if they won a few friends again.'

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297270>

## Top wines 'could reach 000'

DECANTER, UK

23.04.10: **Bordeaux's top 2009s could reach prices as high as 000 per bottle by the end of summer, experts are predicting. Setting prices for the first growths and other major properties is an arcane business, but most observers are certain they will go high, inflated by many successive 'tranches' or releases of stock from the chateaux.** Jean-Guillaume Prats at Chateau Cos d'Estournel said that the gap in price between the First Growths and the rest 'will be enormous.' 'The price of the firsts [to consumers] will be at a very high level, easily reaching 000 over the summer,' he said. Robert Parker, who publishes his scores on Monday, is of the same opinion, 'expect 2009 Lafite at 000 by September,' he writes on his bulletin board. **For their part, Bordeaux negociants are desperately playing down price speculation. Fredrick Rudebeck, managing director of negociant house Beyerman noted that during the campaign for the 2005 vintage one tranche of Lafite did go up to over 000 but from the negociants, not ex-chateau.** 'The idea that they would have an ex-chateau price of 000 seems crazy. But the First Growths are not orbiting around the sun, they are in another galaxy entirely.' He added that despite the recession, 'there seems little doubt that they will start around the 2005 price [of 00 per bottle].' Nadege Sabras, UK sales director at negociants Audy, suggested it was unlikely the First Growths would be as



high as 000 ex-chateaux by the summer, but that they could reach 00, to be sold on by the negociants at 000. She added, 'The UK merchants seem more ready to buy than the US, and more than Asia also - even if many of the wines end up there eventually. But I would worry about the Super Second pricing. They often price in line with the First Growth rises, but their market is far more delicate, and still affected by the financial crisis.' Many negociants are suggesting the major chateaux will run to eight or nine tranches, releasing a tiny amount their production each time and hiking the price as they do it. ...

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297227>

## Chile's wine industry recovers from earthquake

BBC NEWS, UK

28.04.10: The Chile earthquake in February killed hundreds of people and caused around \$30bn (£20bn) in financial losses. **But Chileans were quick to get the country back on its feet and part of that effort is to ensure a good grape harvest for Chile's burgeoning wine industry. Gideon Long reports on progress from the the Colchagua Valley, where just a couple of months ago the streets were literally awash with wine.**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world\\_news\\_america/8649727.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world_news_america/8649727.stm)

## WSTA advises consumers on how to avoid wine fraud

HARPERS WINE & SPIRIT, UK

27.04.10: **The WSTA has offered new advice to consumers investing in wine after fears that demand for the high quality Bordeaux vintage 2009, may lead to potential investors being targeted by fraudsters.** Fears have been fuelled by recent police investigations and arrests in connection with alleged wine investment frauds. **The WSTA urges consumers to make a series of checks on merchants offering wine as an investment vehicle including; Consider the size and reputation of the merchant, as large.** It says established businesses are less likely to collapse or be engaged in dubious trading and are more likely to be registered with Companies House, enabling basic checks about company ownership and accounts to be made. Ask the merchant whether they provide guarantees or carry insurance. Check whether prices are competitive and whether they include delivery and ensure that you ask for and receive invoices and statements clearly establishing your entitlement to the wine you have paid for. WSTA, chief executive, Jeremy Beadles, said: **"Fine wine can be a very good investment but consumers should make some basic checks before they part with their money. Bonafide merchants and brokers won't have any problem proving their credentials but consumers who ask the right questions will ensure they are not caught out by dubious dealers."**

<http://www.harpers.co.uk/news/news-headlines/8957-wsta-advises-consumers-on-how-to-avoid-wine-fraud.html>



## Argentina Opens the Tap for Malbec

THE NEW YORK TIMES, USA



28.04.10: FOR the last few years the wine business has been riddled with dire warnings and disastrous portents. In the United States and around the world, producers have struggled with the bad economy and the sluggish market. One slender segment, seemingly alone, has not only weathered the storm but also prospered: malbec from Argentina. How can this be? Easy. It's the right sort

of wine at the right kind of price. **Argentina is pumping out a river of malbec, and it has been flying off the shelves at an astounding rate. Since 2005, shipments of Argentine malbec to the United States have quintupled, to nearly 3.15 million cases in 2009 from about 628,000 cases in 2005, according to figures from Wines of Argentina, a trade group.** While Argentine malbecs can run to much more than \$100 a bottle, those aren't the ones flowing out of the stores. Sales have been pushed upward by demand for inexpensive bottles. Unlike European wines, whose prices have been driven up by the weakness of the dollar in relation to the euro, **Argentine malbecs have benefited from the strength of the dollar against the Argentine peso. With prices remaining stable, many Americans see Argentine malbecs as great values.** But what about the wines themselves? The wine panel recently tasted 20 bottles of malbec from the Mendoza region, Argentina's leading wine-producing area. Florence Fabricant and I were joined by Brett Feore, the beverage director at Apiary in the East Village, and Kristie Petruccio, the beverage director at Craft in the Flatiron district. About two years ago, we did a tasting of malbecs costing \$25 or less. **We found those wines pleasing and amiable, and I have had no cause to think our opinion of malbecs in that price range would have changed. For this tasting, we set a price cap of \$50 a bottle. That's clearly more than what most people are spending on malbecs, but we wanted to see what a higher price bought.** We did not forsake the lower end; 10 of the 20 bottles were \$25 or less. So what do you get when you spend more? Well-made wines with a little more polish and sleekness than the cheaper bottles, for one thing, and a little more richness and intensity. Over all, these wines were juicy and straightforward, emphasizing fruit flavors with occasional nuances. They were consistent, generally unchallenging and crowd-pleasing. In short, what's not to like? That really depends on your point of view. Malbecs' emphasis on soft, ripe fruitiness over more polarizing flavors and their velvety textures make them safe and reliable for people who may be unsure of their tastes. Some of the wines we opened were a little more ripe and jammy, while others were spicier and more linear. But these were small divergences in what was largely a uniform set of characteristics. **This leads us to the same paradoxical, underwhelming conclusion we reached after the last malbec tasting: part of the reason malbecs are so popular is that they are not displeasing. In other words, their consistent profile is a virtue, especially for people who do not appreciate being surprised or challenged by a wine. The genre itself has become a brand.** "Malbecs are bringing attention to wine," Kristie said. "They make people who are not really interested in wine drink wine. They order malbec — they don't really care which one." From a marketing perspective, Argentina has achieved an enviable position. These days, malbec sings out Argentina as clearly as do grass-fed beef and Eva Perón. Forget that malbec was brought over in the 19th century from France, where it's still grown, primarily in Cahors and in the Loire Valley. ...



<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/28/dining/reviews/28wine.html>

## Small New Zealand harvest welcomed

DECANTER, UK



28.04.10: **New Zealand wine producers are welcoming a smaller harvest than expected. Wineries throughout New Zealand are reporting lower yields than originally forecast, leaving some predicting a shift in the industry from oversupply to shortfall.** In the country's biggest region, Marlborough, Jackson Estate says Sauvignon Blanc is down 15-20% in volume. Volume of its Pinot Noir has fallen 25% due to

cold weather at flowering, and low bunch weights. Similarly, Seresin Estate's yields are down 10-15% but winemaker Clive Dougall told decanter.com: 'That's got to be a bloody good thing for the industry.' While the vintage is reportedly promising in terms of quality, volumes have fallen significantly in other regions. Craggy Range estimates yields are down 15% in Hawke's Bay while Central Otago wineries Mount Edward and Mt Difficulty report a 25% reduction in volume compared to 2009. **This year's cold spring will affect next year's crop and a number of producers have suggested the 2011 harvest will also be small, potentially bringing the oversupply to an end.** The country's excess production has led to widespread discounting, endangering its premium image. Matt Dicey, winemaker at Mt Difficulty, added: 'hopefully the discounting will dry up with a small vintage.' New Zealand Winegrowers has confirmed the total harvest will be 'at the lower end' of its estimate of 265,000-285,000 tonnes.

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297416>

## Wine Domain Catalysts Watch

*This section records the most important articles written by those widely considered to be thought experts in the wine domain. These opinions are not only a valuable source of information but also provide important indications for current and evolving trends in the wine domain.*

## Fine wine is not big wine, says Mondavi

HARPERS WINE & SPIRIT, UK

29.04.10: **Major corporations are not capable of success in the fine wine market, according to Michael Mondavi. Mondavi, a scion of the Californian wine dynasty who now runs Folio Wines, told the Fine Wine 2010 conference in Ribera del Duero that only independent or family businesses had the passion to succeed at this level.** "When big corporations enter, those brands lose their passion, those brands lose their style. The chief financial officer starts making winemaking decisions," he said. "I had the partial luxury of running a publicly-owned company [Robert Mondavi] for 11 years. The ability to ask the question 'how do I make better wines - what's the right thing to do?' evaporates. "You start talking to the chief financial officer and ask the question 'how do I improve earnings?', not 'how do I make better wines?', 'how do I improve the return on assets?', not 'how do I establish a better quality vineyard for 10 or 20 years from now?'. "The questions that CEOs are



forced to ask are quite different to the questions that independent proprietors take in running their own businesses. "Wines in the consumer product arena are ideal for corporate ownership but when you move from that style of wine to fine wine it's passion and dedication that's needed." **Mondavi also criticised the role of retailers. "One thing that frustrated me at Robert Mondavi was when I sold Woodbridge in 2004 we were selling in excess of 10 million cases a year," he said.** "In calling on the customers in the 1970s we sold the wines by talking about the quality of the wine and delivering quality. "When we were selling wine in the 2000s we would go to the buyer of the supermarket chain. **They didn't care about tasting the wine, they didn't care about the style of the wine. They wanted to see if the packaging looked good, what was the deal.**" Fine Wine 2010 is a summit of leading authorities from the wine world, taking place this week in Spain.

<http://www.harpers.co.uk/news/news-headlines/8962-fine-wine-is-not-big-wine-says-mondavi.html>

## Robert Parker Bordeaux 2009 scores shrink Atlantic taste divide

DECANTER, UK

28.04.10: Robert Parker's ringing endorsement of Bordeaux 2009 shows the vintage has brought together American and European palates as never before. **In his assessment of the vintage, published last night, the influential American critic says 2009 'may turn out to be the finest vintage I have tasted in 32 years of covering Bordeaux'. It will prove 'far superior' to most vintages of the last 10 years 'and not far off the quality of the 2005 and 2000'. Eighteen wines are given scores of 98-100 near-perfect in Parker's complex scoring system in which he returns to wines and clarifies his scores after bottling. There is remarkable consistency on both sides of the Atlantic in terms of the top scorers.** Parker has a reputation for favouring right-bank wines, especially the bigger styles, often disagreeing vehemently with his peers in Europe. In 2003 Parker and Jancis Robinson were involved in heated exchanges over Chateau Pavie the former found it delicious, the latter undrinkable. A similar spat looked possible over Cos d'Estournel 2009 a wine which every critic agreed was highly unusual in terms of style and power. Decanter gave it 18.5 points, Parker a possible 100, and Robinson a very low 16.5+. But overall this year Decanter and other European critics are in agreement. Spurrier told decanter.com, 'traditionally, European critics have found it difficult to give full marks. This year I gave 20 out of 20 for the first time, for Margaux. We've pushed the boat out.' Right bank wines such as Ausone, Pomerol's Lafleur and L'Eglise Clinet are favourites, both Decanter and Parker marking them very highly. Angelus too had top marks from Parker, and 18.5 from Decanter. ...

For Spurrier, the most significant thing about 2009 is the fact that it has redrawn the boundaries of what is possible for Bordeaux. 'Any attempt to say that Bordeaux can't handle extra-ripe grapes is nonsense. This proves that Bordeaux can deal perfectly with an untypical vintage.' Spurrier also stressed that any perceived problems with higher-than-normal alcohol have also been defused 'it was just not a problem.' Parker agrees. Reports of excessive alcohol are 'absurd', he says in his introduction, making the point that the Medocs might have been higher than normal, but once the blends were done, everything 'fell between 13% and 14% alcohol.'

<http://www.decanter.com/news/news.php?id=297427>



***Also published:*****Robert Parker's Ratings Out; Beware of Bordeaux Frauds - THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, USA**<http://blogs.wsj.com/wine/2010/04/29/robert-parkers-ratings-out-beware-of-bordeaux-frauds/>**Critics in danger of being "insulting", warns Tim Atkin****HARPERS WINE & SPIRIT, UK**

28.04.10: Critics who judge wines without visiting the country they come from are "insane and insulting", according to Tim Atkin MW. Duero, Spain, Atkin said wine journalists had a responsibility to judge wine by more than just the liquid in the bottle. He also called on the fine wine community to end its "obsession" with Bordeaux and consider wines from all parts of the world, made with varieties considered unfashionable by some. "What worries me about wine writers today is the absence of context," Atkin said. "The idea that a wine remembers where it comes from is all but overlooked, particularly by American journalists. They think it's enough to taste the wine in the bottle. I couldn't believe that Robert Parker only made his first trip to Spain last year." **He added: "Fine wine in Bordeaux in particular has become not something to drink but a source of investment." "I think we've lost sight of what wine, especially fine wine, is all about. It's something you want to pull the cork from and enjoy with friends, not something you want to make 17.4% profit on over the next year.** "Fine wine is increasingly traded like stocks. It could be pork bellies." Atkin said that gold and silver medallists in this year's International Wine Competition came from Greece, Switzerland, Portugal, England, Japan, Romania, Canada, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Mexico, and Macedonia. "Good wine can come from anywhere," he said. "Our interpretation of fine wine regions and grape varieties has barely evolved in the last 100 years despite the increase in quality worldwide." Fine Wine 2010 takes place from Wednesday to Friday this week, with a programme put together for the Consejo Regulador by Wine Intelligence.

<http://www.harpers.co.uk/news/news-headlines/8960-critics-in-danger-of-being-insulting-q-warns-tim-atkin.html>

## Scientific Developments & Technological Breakthroughs Watch

*This section captures the developments in the scientific research landscape in terms of technological breakthroughs and emerging research covering both R&D from companies but also research from academia and institutional bodies. These are essential elements of future trends or cumulatively combined indicators of future market trends and consumer awareness as well as industry practice development.*

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**A little red wine could help protect you from stroke damage****SAGA, UK**23.04.10: Exercise, not smoking, eating well, what next? **A small glass of red wine could be**

**on your health list in the future, writes Lesley Dobson. To drink or not to drink? For anyone who's interested in the effect alcohol has on their health, that's been the question for a while.** Scientists have been uncovering evidence that drinking too much alcohol is bad for us - higher risk of some cancers and heart attack, high blood pressure and liver problems for starters. On the other hand, scientists have also found evidence that drinking red wine in moderation may be good for your heart. **New research, published online in the journal Experimental Neurology, has added further evidence that red wine may be good for our health. Following a study on mice, researchers have discovered that resveratrol, a compound in the skins and seeds of red grapes may protect the brain from the damage that comes with a stroke. ...**

Sylvain Doré, an associate professor of anaesthesiology and critical care medicine and pharmacology and molecular sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, lead the research. **He says the study suggests that resveratrol increases levels of an enzyme, heme oxygenase, that is already known to shield nerve cells in the brain from damage. "Our study adds to evidence that resveratrol can potentially build brain resistance to ischaemic stroke," says Doré.** This doesn't mean that you should start downing resveratrol supplements. In fact Sylvain Doré cautions against it, as the evidence so far is unclear on whether these supplements could do harm or good. Although resveratrol comes from red grapes, it may be that the alcohol in red wine is needed to concentrate the amounts of the compound. But that doesn't mean that you should open another bottle of red wine. No-one knows yet how much resveratrol you need to give the best protection to the brain. And we don't yet know which kind of red wine to choose, as different types of red wine contain different amounts of this compound. In the end, the amount of resveratrol you need to protect your brain from stroke could be quite small. "Resveratrol itself may not be shielding brain cells from free radical damage directly. Instead resveratrol and its metabolites may be prompting the cells to defend themselves," says Doré. "It's not likely that brain cells can have high enough local levels of resveratrol to be protective," he says. The resveratrol is needed to jump-start this protective enzymatic system that is already present within the cells. "Even a small amount may be sufficient," Doré says. (The research is ongoing, so we can expect further news on this subject. Doré is also testing the effects of giving resveratrol to mice after a stroke. This work is also in its early stages, but so far results suggest that it may be beneficial.) ...

<http://www.saga.co.uk/health/news/red-wine-and-stroke-damage-protection-110.asp>

## Wines from Greece Publicity Monitor

*This section presents all international publicity relating to wines from Greece.*

### The discerning drinker: European wine

**LONDON EVENING STANDARD, UK**



30.04.10: British Eurosceptic nutters would, of course, like to blame the whole thing on the euro, but Greek government mismanagement is in fact a bit more straightforward than that. In the overall scheme of things, the extra pain the crisis will bring to the Greek wine industry might seem relatively minor. But we should spare a thought for some of Europe's most determined and idiosyncratic wine producers. **The range of Greek wines generally**

available in this country is not huge: apart from the excellent selection available by mail order from Vickbar wines ([www.vickbarwines.co.uk](http://www.vickbarwines.co.uk)), Waitrose has easily the biggest selection, many of them on offer at present. Mediterra Sauvignon-Vilana 2009, Crete (Waitrose, £8.49 reduced to £5.59 until May 11). A blend of local and international grapes, this is fresh and juicy, full of crisp citrus fruit with floral notes. **Good summer drinking. Hatzidakis Assyrtiko 2008, Santorini (Waitrose, £9.99). Greece teems with indigenous grapes found nowhere else: assyrtiko is potentially the classiest of the whites. When grown under the almost impossibly dry conditions of the volcanic island of Santorini, it produces dry, fresh, intensely mineral wines like this one. Highly individual. Skouras Rose 2009, Peloponnese (Waitrose, £9.99 reduced to £7.99 until May 11). This big, deeply coloured rose is a blend of the native white moschofilero and one of Greece's great red grapes, aghiorghitiko. Big and bold, its deep cherry flavours and solid tannins stand up to food well. Mediterra Silenus Kappa Sigma red 2008, Crete (House of Fraser, 101 Victoria St, SW1, £8.49). Made 80 per cent from the local kotsifali grape and 20 per cent syrah, this boasts bright cherry fruit and refreshing acidity: would stand up well to tomato-based dishes. Tsantali Cabernet Sauvignon 2006, Halkidiki (Waitrose, reduced from £8.49 to £6.79 until May 11). This reliable red might not be the most typically Greek of wines, made entirely from cab in a fairly international style, but it's very tasty, soft and full of bright berry fruit with minty, herbal notes. Good value on offer.**

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/lifestyle/article-23829456-the-discerning-drinker-european-wine.do>

## Event features wines of Greece

THE DAYTONA BEACH NEWS – JOURNAL, USA

28.04.10: **Join Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church for a Greek wine tasting from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** Friday, at 2940 C.R. 214 (at the I-95 overpass), St. Augustine. The tasting will be in the Michael C. Carlos Hall. **The second annual wine event will feature seven wines from the oldest winery in Greece, Achaia Clauss, which dates back to 1841.** A premium lager craft beer, Vergina, brewed in Greece, will be available for tasting and purchase by the glass. Complimentary appetizers will be available; freshly baked bread, imported olive oil and baklava will be for sale. Tickets, \$10, are available in advance or at the door.

<http://www.news-journalonline.com/lifestyle/food/2010/04/28/event-features-wines-of-greece.html>

## Blogosphere Monitor

*In this section the most important blog entries for wine and Greek wine are recorded.*

## The World's Most Popular Wine Bulletin Board Goes Away

VINOGRAPHY, USA

26.04.10: Over the past few years I've partaken occasionally in an entertaining spectator sport: watching wine bulletin boards implode under the weight of their own inhumanity. The self-



destruction of most topical online forums, I have come to believe, is only a matter of time. The physical remove of online messaging, coupled with our tendency towards knee jerk responses, mixed with the difficulty in reading emotions in plain text, doused with a liberal dose of pricks and know-it-alls spells disaster for most of forums over time. I liked checking in on the Mark Squires Bulletin Board, hosted by Robert Parker, from time to time just to watch the display of hubris, petty tongue-lashing, immaturity and hyperbole, occasionally mixed with an interesting opinion or two. I think I made about 30 posts on the board over the course of the last 5 years, but I read my way through thousands of messages, most often with a shaking head, wondering how on earth people managed to continue taking part in such mayhem. But the mayhem ends today. Visitors to the Mark Squires bulletin board today were greeted by a message that the forums will be closed until April 27th, and when they re-open, they will be available only to paid subscribers of eRobertParker.Com and the print version of the Wine Advocate.

**In short: the party is over.**

Of course, as is common with all such communities, several splinter groups had already broken off to found their own forum sites over the past four years, thanks in part to the irrational and draconian tactics of site administrator Mark Squires. Squires earned the nickname "Chairman Mao," along with the lifelong enmity of scores of members who found themselves banned from the site without explanation, and in the worst cases, to forever to have their names automatically replaced with asterisks whenever they were mentioned on the site after their departure. **In the past year or two, the site played host to an increasingly vocal opposition to Squires' tactics on the board, as well as to a growing base of both subscribers and guests who were using the forum to criticize Robert Parker and his cadre of contributors, most notably Jay Miller, whose tendency towards high scores made him a favorite punching bag.** The last thread I read on the site, a few days ago, included about 12 pages of ankle biting about the fact that Parker had given a very low score recently to a wine that one of his contributors had rated very highly. My own professional opinion (now wearing my hat as brand experience expert) is that Mark Squires and his actions on the bulletin board did untold damage to the reputation and brand of Robert Parker. He made countless enemies of those who would have otherwise spoken highly or at least favorably of Robert Parker, and created a culture that left a sour taste in the mouths of many more. It's not clear exactly why the forums will now only be available to those who pay. The official explanation provided contends that the site has become "extremely costly" to supervise and maintain, but it's hard to imagine how that could be the case, or more specifically how kicking off half of the members would make it substantially cheaper to do so. Did Parker and his contributors tire of criticism by members that were not loyal subscribers? Were they sick of blogs like this one linking to the excruciatingly long battles of ego and pride that characterized such simple discussions as whether context actually matters in the evaluation of a wine?. Was this an easy way of once and for all separating the forums from the brand and the presence of Mark Squires? Or is this move simply a decision to serve only "our loyal subscribers through a more focused effort on them." We'll never know for sure, but this move at a time when the bulletin board seemed to be losing steam certainly raises many questions, including whether it will thrive, or whether even paying members will find other outlets for their discussions. There were enough good discussions on the Parker forums to make me somewhat sad to see them go -- friends would send me a gem every once in a while. But even the very best discussions required sorting through so much bile, inside jokes, and machismo that it's hard not to feel a certain sense of "good riddance." Those of you who have already fled elsewhere, where is your favorite place to engage in flame wars and civilized discussion about wine these days?



[http://www.vinography.com/archives/2010/04/the\\_worlds\\_most\\_popular\\_wine\\_b.html](http://www.vinography.com/archives/2010/04/the_worlds_most_popular_wine_b.html)

## Bordeaux 2009: all over but the pricing

DR. VINO, USA

28.04.10: Robert Parker posted his reviews of Bordeaux 2009 yesterday on his subscription web site, [erobertparker.com](http://erobertparker.com). **In an article entitled "Once Upon a Time (1899, 1929, 1949, 1959, 2009)," he lavished praise on the vintage, particularly the cabernet blends of the left bank, and on many wines individually: 21 wines received scores of potentially 100 points. Many were accompanied by an asterisk, which indicate that they are the best wine from the estate that he has ever tasted as a barrel sample.** For the number-obsessed, **Bordeaux overview has put together a grid of all the critics' scores. Of course, tasting is a matter of opinion and others have expressed their views** (captured, in part, in our tweet roundup). Writing in the Financial Times, Jancis Robinson compared the ripeness and high alcohols she experienced to California, remarking "I have never written the word "Napa" so often in my tasting notes." Parker, by contrast, praised the best Medocs for being "powerful and concentrated" and hailed them "historic." He dismissed reports of high alcohol as being mostly "absurd." Tim Atkin, a British writer, put together a very skimmable report (here as pdf) calling the vintage "great but not uniform." John Gilman had a similar view, adding that 2009 was a "fantastic" vintage for Sauternes. In his subscription newsletter, Gilman observed two stylistic camps among the top reds, one epitomized by Lafite that is suave and seductive from the get-go, and another, more structured style requiring bottle aging, embodied by Latour and Petrus. There is a great deal of consensus about the first growths Lafite-Rothschild, Margaux, Latour and Haut-Brion. Mouton-Rothschild was a notch below for most tasters; Tim Atkin compared it to a Chilean carmenere and gave it 94 points. However, some flash points have emerged, most notably Cos d'Estournel. Parker gave it a score of 98-100 with an asterisk calling it "extraordinary...one of the greatest young wines I have ever tasted" while Neal Martin who also writes for the Wine Advocate, lamented the alcohol level, compared it to a wine from the Douro, and scored it 89-91. Tim Atkin noted the 14.5% alcohol on the label, called it over-the-top, compared it to an Australian shiraz and gave it 95 points. John Gilman wrote that the was "one of the worst young wines I have ever had to taste, as it displays an utter contempt for both the history of its region and the intelligence of its clients...I cannot imagine having to drink it. This is a train wreck of monumental proportions. 67-68 points." The prices on futures will roll out in the next few weeks/months. Hit the comments with your thoughts on Lafite!

<http://www.drvin.com/2010/04/28/bordeaux-2009-parker-lafite-cos/>

## How Far Does Truth in Wine Labeling Go?

WINES & VINES, USA



28.04.10: Vancouver, British Columbia -- With the rise of each new generation, change overtakes conventional wisdom. As the late Johnny Cash sang, "And the lonely voice of youth cries, 'What is truth?'" Whether

presenters were able to offer definitive guidance to a new generation of consumers last week in



Vancouver, during one of North America's biggest wine festivals, is another question. **When panelists filtered out of the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue here following a symposium about truth in labeling that was part of the Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival, about all that was certain was that consumers want truth. What truth the wine industry is willing to deliver, and the truth consumers can stomach, is another question. "Some producers are rather economical with the truth," remarked Marc Kent, chief winemaker and co-owner of Boekenhoutskloof in South Africa. "We've got a responsibility as producers to do what is right." But he also told of being at a dinner the previous night where consumers he thought were well-informed were shocked at the use of egg whites to fine wine -- and fresh egg whites from free range chickens at that. "I offered that I could use freeze-dried product in a bag from Italy, would that make them feel any better? And there was no comfort," he said. This suggested to him that consumers are probably comfortable being unaware of the practices of larger wineries. "Sometimes it's better not to know," he said, as laughter rippled around the room.** Still, panel moderator Anthony Gismondi argued that the wine industry must be transparent when making claims about sustainable practices and the like. "A lot of outsiders are going to come in and clean up this mess in ways that we don't want them to," he warned, pointing to the plethora of designations, certifications and points of confusion among consumers. On this point, the discussion harkened back to a similar symposium at last year's festival that discussed the importance of sustainable practices to grapegrowers, winemakers and the general public. Authenticity was key, those panelists concluded. After the session, attendees shared their thoughts on hand-scrawled post-it notes. This year, José Alberto Zuccardi, CEO of Argentina's Familia Zuccardi, repeated the statement. "What we put on the label must be authentic," he said. He added that a label can't do everything; like most other forms of expression, labels are limited, communicating only a part of the message, he said. Zuccardi's fellow panelists suggested complementing the basic label on the bottle with online labels that provide more information than a consumer could reasonably be expected to digest in a store aisle. Vancouver retailer John Clerides of Marquis Wine Merchants argued that in the current retailing environment, a label is just one means of informing consumers what's in a bottle of wine, with social media, in-store chat tags, old-fashioned word-of-mouth and guidance from retailers among the alternative information sources consumers can now tap. "I think you also get hung up on the idea of the label being the only, physical, necessary means to convey the information," added Tim Pawsey, a Vancouver wine writer. "We now have technology that allows us to scan a barcode and see a total breakdown (of information)." Toronto lawyer Arnold Schwisberg, who champions clarity on matters such as geographic origin, warned against providing too much information. He said it "could actually be detrimental" to the image of a wine. He favored e-labels for nutritional content and other information ancillary to the sale of the product. But master sommelier John Szabo came out in favor of providing as much information as possible for consumers to know what they're buying. "Full disclosure is crucial," he said. "How you put it on the label is another question." Moreover, with consumers (and the government) dictating which aspects of the winemaking process require disclosure, establishing firm ground rules is difficult. Ultimately, through a series of votes, panelists and symposium attendees concluded that it will take a combination of consumer feedback, industry initiative and government regulation to ensure that truth -- and the truth consumers want to know -- is disclosed on labels. This year's Vancouver Playhouse International Wine Festival attracted 197 wineries from 14 countries, and attendance of approximately 25,000 people.

<http://www.winesandvines.com/template.cfm?section=news&content=73639&htitle=How%20Far%20Does%20Truth%20in%20Wine%20Labeling%20Go%3F>



## 7 Questions to Ask Wholesalers About H.R. 5034 at Hearings

### FERMENTATION, USA

28.04.10: In a teleconference today with Journalists and industry types, Representative Mike Thompson (D)-CA made clear his absolute opposition to H.R. 5034 and the efforts he is making to defeat it. There is no question that Representative Thompson is the champion of wineries, retailers and consumers on this issue. Among the items Thompson addressed was the disposition of Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the rest of the House leadership. Representative Thompson noted that Speaker Pelosi and the rest of the House leadership stand opposed to H.R. 5034, likely a testament to Thompson's powers of persuasiveness. In any case, this is good news for those who would be in opposition to H.R. 5034, the alcohol wholesalers bill that would essentially take state shipping laws outside the orbit of the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause and allow states to pass discriminatory alcohol laws that had no chance of being challenged in courts. Representative Thompson was not able to say what the chances were that H.R. 5034 would have a hearing in the Judiciary Committee. He noted that the National Beer Wholesalers Association, the originators of the bill, continued to lobby very hard on Capital Hill and were putting great amounts of pressure on congresspeople. If there are hearings in the House Judiciary Committee it will be very important that certain issues related to this bill be brought out in the open. This can happen via testimony, but it is much more effective to force wholesalers to answer the questions directly. Toward that end...

THE QUESTIONS ALCOHOL WHOLESALERS SHOULD BE ASKED AT A HEARING  
CONGRESSIONAL H.R 5034

- 1. What specific forms of deregulation have hit the states since Granholm that have been harmful to consumers? To States?**
- 2. Is there any evidence that law enforcement has had a problem with wine getting into the hands of minors via direct shipment?**
- 3. Under the provisions of H.R. 5034, could a state pass a law that allowed its own wineries to ship wine to its residents but discriminated against out-of-state wineries by banning shipments of their wines to residents?**
- 4. There are now over 7000 wineries in the United States. Is it possible for wholesalers in any given state to represent all of them and, if not, how would wineries access that market without direct shipment of wine?**
- 5. Is it true that under H.R. 5034, the only thing a state would have to do to defend a discriminatory ban on direct shipping from out of state wineries or retailers would be to simply state in the law that it is meant to uphold the three tier system?**
- 6. What happens to the winery that once shipped wine directly to consumers in a state, but no longer can under laws made possible by H.R. 5034 and who also can't find a distributor to take them on?**
- 7. I've heard numerous accounts from small wineries who have been told by retailers in another state that they would buy multiple cases of their wine, but that they must go through a wholesaler. But when the wineries asked a wholesaler to represent them and help them get the wine to the retailer, the wholesaler refused. Is there any other recourse that winery might have in order to sell its goods? What would be the problem with allowing the winery to simply ship the wine directly to**



the retailer who wants it?

<http://fermentation.typepad.com/fermentation/2010/04/7-questions-to-ask-wholesalers-about-hr-5034-at-hearings.html>

## Peripheral Domains Intelligence

*This section covers developments from associated domains such as Greek food, taste and culinary trends, as well as any other significant information that has an impact on or derives from the global wine domain.*

### Henry VIII's opulent wine fountain returns to Hampton Court Palace

TIMES ONLINE, UK



30.04.10: On most camping trips to France, the drink is served from a cheap bottle and plastic cups. For Henry VIII at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, only the construction of a four-metre-high wine fountain would do. **From tomorrow a working replica of one of the Tudor monarch's most intoxicating extravagances will be serving wine to visitors at**

**Hampton Court Palace. The fountain will run with red and white wine at weekends and bank holidays after curators re-created a 16th-century design from a painting of the Field of the Cloth of Gold.** The summit meeting with the young French King Francis I in 1520 was one of the highlight's of Henry's reign, a weeks-long festival of jousting and excess. At the centre of it, according to a Tudor painting that hangs in the Palace, was a vast wine fountain around which Royal hangers-on can be seen drinking, fighting, vomiting and sleeping it off. In his contemporary account of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, Edward Hall, a London lawyer, described a "a fountain of enbowed work, gilt with fine gold, and bice [blue], ingrayled with antique works, the old God of wine called Bacchus burling the wine, which by conduits in the earth ran to all people plenteously with red, white and claret wine, over whose heads was written in letters of Roman in gold, faite bonne chere quy vouldra". That has now been re-created in timber, lead, bronze and gold leaf, right down to the inscription: "Make goode cheere who wyshes". It now stands in the palace's largest courtyard, on the site where archaeologists found the remains of a 16th-century fountain two years ago. Although it is unclear whether that fountain ran with wine, such devices were a common feature of Henry's revelries. At Anne Boleyn's coronation in 1533, public water fountains in London ran with wine all day. As Hall described one: "Marble and four streams without pipe did rise an ell high and meet together in a little cup above the fountain, which fountain ran abundantly with Racked Rennish wine till night". "People think of Henry VIII as a tyrant, but Hampton Court was a pleasure palace, where guests were entertained with spectacular revels and festivities, and wine and beer were drunk in enormous quantities," said Kent Rawlinson, curator of historic buildings at the palace. "It was about showing off his wealth, power, and magnificence. The Field of the Cloth of Gold was like the Olympics — pouring giant amounts of money into something that demonstrated the power and fertility of the nation." The Tudors were familiar with wine from Spain, Germany and even Greece, but French wines were the favourite, particularly those from the former English possessions in Bordeaux and Aquitaine, according to Mark Meltonville, a food historian at Hampton Court. ...



A modern wine-dispensing mechanism has also had to be installed, as copper and lead pipes do not, apparently, meet health and safety laws. There is one other key difference to the spirit of liberality that reigned at Henry's court — the wine will now cost £3.50 a glass.

[http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life\\_and\\_style/food\\_and\\_drink/wine/article7111810.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/food_and_drink/wine/article7111810.ece)

## River Loire is the perfect spot for wine lovers on France boat holidays

TRAVELBITE, UK



29.04.10: If you want to explore some of France on your boating holidays this summer then a trip to the Loire Valley is certainly worth considering. **The Canal Latéral à la Loire follows the same course as the winding River Loire, taking you on a cruise through one of France's best-known wine-growing regions.** This is a perfect destination for a relaxing inland waterway cruise, with beautiful countryside and delicious wines to taste along the way. Adults who are looking for France boat holidays that

meet all their needs will find that the Loire Valley cruising region does not disappoint. **The region offers a combination of picturesque French villages, rolling green hills and plenty of historic sights to visit. But one of the biggest draws for any boat holiday in this part of the country is its wine. The Loire Valley is renowned the world over as one of the most prestigious wine-producing regions in France, with appellations such as Sancerre and Pouilly Fumé among the wines to be produced in this area.** There are many different vineyards to visit and sampling the assorted wines that can be found there. If you are going to be selective during your France boating holidays through the Loire Valley, then a trip to the medieval hilltop village of Sancerre is a must. As one of the most famous names within the Loire Valley region, a trip to France would not be complete without tasting this distinctive Sauvignon Blanc. You can take a tour of the vineyards and learn about the town's rich wine-producing history, which dates back to the 12th century. For those who are keen wine buffs, you may also want to find out a bit more about the geology of the hills where Sancerre produces its wines as the different soil types affect the flavour of the drink. Afterwards, you can head back to your boat and take a few bottles of wine with you to drink as you relax on a slow-paced river cruise. If you want some authentic French food to accompany your fine wines, then you should certainly sample the local goat's cheese – Crottin de Chavignol, or if you have a sweet tooth then tarte tatin could be the best choice. Created in the Loire Valley, this classic apple tart will be complemented by one of the region's sweet wines. While relaxing and sampling the food and wine available in the Loire Valley may be enjoyable, there is still plenty to do along the way. Why not stop off at some of the historic villages that line the waterways? One town worth seeing is the medieval settlement of Charité-sur-Loire. ...

[http://www.travelbite.co.uk/travel-partners/articles/europe/france/river-loire-the-perfect-spot-wine-lovers-on-france-boat-holidays-\\$1375235\\$1371623.htm](http://www.travelbite.co.uk/travel-partners/articles/europe/france/river-loire-the-perfect-spot-wine-lovers-on-france-boat-holidays-$1375235$1371623.htm)



## Global Sustaining & Emerging Trends Digest

*This section presents those global, macro and micro trends that affect or potentially affect the wine domain. Comprehensive fusion and distillation of the above publicity parathesis concludes to the most important aspects as those appear in the current setting.*

### Research - Global drinking culture enters new era of heterogeneity

JUST DRINKS, UK

29.04.10: **Portfolio diversity has become increasingly important over the past decade, fuelled by intensive retail modernisation and a new generation of consumers with high expectations of choice.** 'Drinking Cultures of the World – Globalisation Creates Opportunities', Euromonitor International's latest briefing on global drinking habits, highlights the challenges and opportunities going forward.

#### Not for all the beer in China

**Certain drinks are synonymous with specific countries. It might be tea in China, wine in France, coffee in Italy or Tequila in Mexico. But, our traditional perceptions of how the world drinks have been challenged over the past decade, and this is reflected by a new generation of dynamic niche categories, notably functional drinks, flavoured milk, soy beverages, drinking yoghurt as well as RTD tea, coffee and premixes.** These types of drinks were virtually non-existent on the global stage ten years ago, but they are now a significant collective force, accounting for around US\$1 in every \$8 we spend on our liquid intake, according to Euromonitor International. Crucially, it is a participation forecast to bulge over the next five years. **The rapid expansion of supermarkets, especially in the emerging economies, has been an important platform for showcasing wider beverage choice, driving the expectations of a burgeoning and increasingly aspirational middle-class. Stronger pressure on products to rotate has also brought pricing to the forefront of the operating environment.** These big changes have happened in a relatively short timeframe, bringing with them tough strategic challenges. For example, PepsiCo's decision last year to regain control of its two biggest bottlers, Pepsi Bottling Group and Pepsi Americas, was a deal borne of this new era of heterogeneous global beverage culture. **We are now in an age in which portfolio diversity, on the one hand, and control over route to market, on the other, has become a prerequisite to maximising share of throat power. Wider beverage choice has also enabled consumers to challenge traditional drinking habits.** As a result, it has become increasingly rare for a country's drinking culture to be defined by one single category. In China, for example, there are now multiple categories with high volume participation. Take beer, which has been China's biggest beverage growth story in absolute terms over the past decade, generating some 15bn litres of new retail business between 1999 and 2009, compared with 4bn (RTD) litres for hot tea. **Over the next five years China is forecast to account for more than half the world's absolute volume growth in beer, which is a colossal impact. China is also forecast to fuel over one third of new wine consumption to 2014.** Beer and wine are not the only big beverage growth categories in China. Retail volume of RTD tea reached 10bn litres in 2009, over 1bn litres more than the RTD equivalent for hot tea. Only ten years ago, hot tea generated more than five times the consumption of its soft drinks RTD sidekick. This does not mean that the hot tea culture has been killed off in China, but rather



that the drinking culture has entered a more dynamic and multifaceted era. One could equally add fruit juice into this cultural beverage melting pot, with the category now commanding twice the volume of carbonates, when ten years ago the reverse held true. ...

### **Re-mapping big category hot spots**

**As consumption culture evolves from single- to multi-profile categories, so we are also seeing significant revisions in category hot spots.** Western Europe, for example, has traditionally been the hub of bottled water culture, but a combination of weaker purchasing power and consumer rebellion against throwaway plastic bottles has cost the sector dearly. This has raised the share of throat importance of tap water, both in the on- and off-trade channels. Downward pressure in the developed markets has also meant that the major bottled water players are increasingly looking to first- and second-tier emerging markets to beef up their bottom line. Over the next five years, the top ten countries of forecast absolute growth in bottled water are all emerging markets, according to Euromonitor International, namely China, Mexico, India, Indonesia, Iran, Brazil, Turkey, South Korea, Argentina and Hungary. CSD (carbonated soft drinks) culture too, and the investment behind it, is necessarily expanding beyond its traditional markets. In the US, for example, the category has leaked around 5bn litres in the off-trade in five years. Going forward, some of the best investment opportunities are likely to be seen in countries with newly invigorated CSD cultures, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Nigeria. In the alcoholic drinks market, vodka is under the cosh in its biggest cultural base, Russia. Yet, the category is thriving in India, the US and Germany, where it has developed a growing prestige among a new generation of spirits consumers. Premium vodka, in particular, has become a popular down trade from deluxe Scotch whisky during the recent period of consumer belt-tightening. As for Scotch, new consumer hot spots are identified as China, Mexico, Brazil and the United Arab Emirates, offsetting contractions in traditionally high-profile markets such as Spain and the UK. The key lesson of this rapidly changing beverage playing field is that ambitious companies can no longer rely on limited portfolios, much less on consumption safe havens. The past decade has shown us that drinking culture is liable to sudden periods of correction, with bubbles bursting and new buds blooming. This has created a challenging and multi-dimensional competitive environment, in which there is a fair measure of risk but also an ocean of opportunity. Hitting the right strategic agenda has never been more important.

<http://www.just-drinks.com/article.aspx?id=100566>

